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SCIENCE

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PHYSICS AND DAILY LIFE¹

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THE school system of Germany has often been held up to the teachers of this country as a model of perfection. Germany has been called a nation of schoolmasters, and the wonderful progress of its industries has been attributed in no small measure to the rigid training and high efficiency of its gymnasia, its universities and its vocational schools. Even at the present moment our country is being urged on many sides to establish alongside the regular public secondary schools an independent system of vocational schools, the chief argument in favor of this plan being the fact that it was "made in Germany."

Notwithstanding the fact that the reputation of the German schools is so brilliant on this side of the Atlantic, there are many thoughtful and earnest dwellers in the Fatherland who consider the training given by their schools to be of very doubtful educational value. Thus, some twenty years ago Emperor William II. called a congress of the leading schoolmen of Germany to consider what could be done to bridge the chasm that yawned so wide and deep between the work of the schools and the daily lives of the pupils. Little was accomplished as the result of this congress. The schoolmen declared it were little short of sacrilege to experiment with schools, which had always enjoyed a reputation for perfection equaled only by that of the medieval monks. Since that time, the vocational and industrial schools of Germany have developed alongside and, in large

¹ Presented at the conference of the University of Illinois with the secondary schools of the state, November 22, 1912.